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Former Boston Police Commissioner Francis 'Mickey' Roache dies



Michael Flaherty shakes the hand of his supporter Ex Police Commissioner Mickey Roach at Florian Hall in Dorchester. Tuesday, November 08, 2011. (Staff photo by Stuart Cahill)

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Former Boston Police Commissioner and City-Councilor-at-Large Francis M. "Mickey" Roache died Monday. He was 82.

On its blog, the police department mourned the passing of Roache, who served as commissioner from 1985 until 1993.

Roache graduated from South Boston High School in 1954 and enlisted in the Marines. He joined the Boston Police Department in 1968 and rose up through the ranks to serve as commissioner.

"Mickey Roache had a profound impact on this city," said Charlie Burke, his first chief of staff after he joined the City Council. "He moved race relations forward and was a great listener. The BPD is a better place because he served at the helm. He made the department a more welcoming environment by being approachable."

Roache mandated drug testing for BPD employees and was praised for trying to rid the department of corruption.

But African-American leaders called for his resignation over the police's handling of the infamous case of Charles Stuart, who falsely claimed that his pregnant wife was shot and killed by a black assailant.

The Massachusetts Association of Minority Law Enforcement Officers sent its condolences on Twitter to Roache's family, who were with him when he died at home.

In 1993, he made an unsuccessful bid for mayor after former Boston mayor Ray Flynn became ambassador to the Vatican. Roache later was elected councilor-at-large, a post he held from 1996 to 2002.

"When Mickey transitioned from police officer to politician, he was more like a priest," said Councilor-at-Large Michael F. Flaherty. "He had a kind, calm, reassuring way about him. He was always advocating for the less fortunate and always worked to find common ground...Of all the people I served with, he was the most humble and the most honorable."

Steve Murphy, who served with Roache on the City Council for six years, described him as an inveterate gentleman and hands-on politician.

After his time as an at-large councilor, Roache went on to become the Suffolk County register of deeds until Dec. 31, 2015.

Tags: **Boston City Council**, **Boston Police Department**



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